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ART. VI. — CRITICAL NOTICES.

1. — *Rig-Veda-Sanhita. The Sacred Hymns of the Brahmans translated and explained by F. MAX MÜLLER.* Vol. I. *Hymns to the Maruts or the Storm-gods.* London : Trübner & Co. 8vo. pp. clii, 263. 1869.

EVERY one, nowadays, who knows anything about ancient literatures and ancient creeds, knows the exceptional interest belonging to the Hindu Veda, both as a literary and as a religious monument. Almost every one, too, knows the difficulty of entering this great mine of primeval thought and belief, — from which, it is true, many treasures of golden ore have been brought to day, but which has never been thrown fully open to the explorer. With its exploration the name of Professor Müller has for long years been closely and conspicuously connected; and now that we have from his hand the beginning of a translation, and a fully annotated translation, or *traduction raisonnée*, as he styles it, of the Veda, it cannot be otherwise than important to see in what spirit he has undertaken the work, and with what success.

This is the more necessary, inasmuch as probably no one has opened the volume without experiencing, in one respect, at least, a severe disappointment. Müller's translation had been announced by his publishers as to form eight volumes; in fact, it is still so advertised. This may have been the result of a misunderstanding, or else perhaps the estimated octamerism of the work was meant to be understood in some peculiar sense, not obvious to those who were asked to subscribe for it; but when the first of the eight appeared, and was found to contain only *twelve hymns* out of the more than a thousand that make up the Rig-Veda, — or, in verses, just about *one seventy-fifth* of the whole text, — people could not help asking with what and how essential matter the other pages of the stout and costly volume were filled, for whose benefit such immense breadth of treatment had been intended, and whether it was, after all, for the common advantage, and a thing that the general public ought gladly to submit to, for the sake of the more special scholars to whom it might be as good as indispensable.

It does not, however, take a long examination to satisfy one that the volume is not wholly innocent of padding. Thus, in the first three hymns translated (with one of the later ones), precisely one quarter of the double page, as it lies open, is occupied with Müller's version. The whole lower half is filled with the versions of his three predecessors, Wilson, Benfey, and Langlois, given "for the sake of comparison."

But who is to make the comparison? Not those who know nothing of the Vedic language, and cannot test each of the four by the original; they, of course, could make no intelligent choice, and would be likely to be captivated by the smoothest or most spirited rendering. Not, again, the Vedic scholar; he has the other three already on his shelves; he wants to know how Müller understands a given passage, and will find for himself the materials of whatever comparison he cares for. One of the two remaining half-pages contains the transliterated text of the hymn itself; and this is equally a superfluous addition; the student of the Veda has it in another form, and does not want it here; the public at large can only stare at it with wondering eyes. This useless transliterated Vedic text accompanies all the translations given, and seems intended to accompany all that shall follow; and it is not even added compactly at the foot of the page, but is spaced out to fill the same room with the much more bulky English version opposite. It is a complete waste, and we trust that Professor Müller may be persuaded to leave it out in the remaining volumes of the series.

The supererogatory matter thus described does not, it is true, count for very much in a volume made up as this is. With all its dilution, the translation occupies less than an eighth part of the pages placed in our hands. More than four times as much space (or 214 pages against 49) is given to the notes, or commentary. This commentary, to the mind of its author, is so important a part of his work, that upon the strength of it he "ventures to call his own the *first* translation of the Rig-Veda." The propriety of this claim will appear as we go on; at present, we have to look at the character of the notes themselves. They are, we are told, intended to present "a full account of the reasons which justify the translator in assigning such a power to such a word, and such a meaning to such a sentence." "I mean by translation a real deciphering," adds our author, "a work like that which Burnouf performed in his first attempts at a translation of the Avesta." This comparison with Burnouf's work does not seem quite in point. It is well known that the great French scholar produced two or three bulky quartos upon the Avesta, in which he accomplished the translation and exposition of only a few paragraphs of its text. But, in the first place, he called it a "commentary," not a "translation." And, in the second place, the circumstances of the two cases are as unlike as they can possibly be. The Zend language, when Burnouf took it up, was a *terra incognita*, and a most difficult and perplexing field of investigation. It partook of the nature of an inscription in an unknown language; it had to be deciphered. A mere version there, without full exposition of the methods by which it was obtained,

would have been unintelligible and valueless. Burnouf's aim was to point out the way to others, to show them what they had to do if they would read the Zend and interpret the hidden meaning of the Zoroastrian scripture. His work was therefore essentially inceptive and incapable of completion, and it always remained a fragment. As for the Veda, it occupies — with a marked difference, to be sure, of degree — a like position with the Iliad, or the Psalms: its method of interpretation is obvious, and the materials far from scanty; many scholars have been long engaged in its study, and have rendered parts or all of it, with more or less success, according to their opportunities and capacities; they have gone through, over their own tables, with processes of research and comparison in part identical, in part analogous, with those which Müller writes out at full length and breadth in his notes, claiming simply on the score of having done so the honor of being first translator,—an honor which we imagine that the community of Vedic scholars will be very slow to award him, at the expense of such men as Benfey and Wilson and Roth and Muir and Aufrecht; or even of Langlois.

And they will be the slower to do so, inasmuch as he is far from redeeming his promise to account fully for every word and sentence of his translation. Such a promise, indeed, is in the nature of things incapable of being redeemed; one might write a volume about a single hymn, instead of a whole dozen, and still overlook important points, or treat them imperfectly. This being so, every translator making the pretensions that Müller makes must be held to account for the judgment with which he selects his points for detailed treatment, and the economy with which he expends his limited and precious space. If he tithes the mint and anise and cummin, and omits the weightier matters, we shall condemn his work as so far a failure. And that this is the case with Müller is, in our opinion, incontestable. Let us take the first verse of his translation as a specimen, and test a little its quality.

It reads: "Those who stand around him while he moves on, harness the bright red steed; the lights in heaven shine forth." To this we have the note that "The poet begins with a somewhat abrupt description of a sunrise. Indra is taken as the god of the bright day, whose steed is the sun, and whose companions the Maruts, or the storm-gods": and then Professor Müller runs off into an interminable note about the word *arusha*, 'red,' translated in the verse 'red' [steed], a note actually occupying eleven pages and a half, and involving the detailed citation and translation of some scores of Vedic passages, with a refutation of the views taken respecting sundry of them by the St. Petersburg Sanskrit lexicon. All this would be very much in place in

a monograph, or as preliminary study to a dictionary-article on *arusha*; but so little has it to do with the exposition of this particular verse that it is great matter of question whether Müller, after all, translates the word correctly here. The next verse, namely, goes on to state that "they harness to the chariot on each side his (Indra's) two favorite bays." Why this, if his saddle-horse was already saddled and bridled? Or did the latter "move on" so fast while they only "stood around," that it escaped their hands, so that they had, as the next best thing, to turn to and put the double team into the wagon, that the impatient god might not lose his ride up the firmament? Surely, if the horses are harnessed in the second verse, and if the two verses belong together, it must be the "bright red chariot" that is harnessed (for the verb is one that is freely employed of either chariot or horses) in the first. Or can Professor Müller prove to us that the sun may be taken as Indra's steed, but not as his chariot? Something from the rest of the Veda to illustrate the relation of the sun and Indra, who is no solar deity, would have been far more welcome than the discussion about "red." Again, who are the bystanders here referred to? and how can they stand about, and yet harness something that is moving onward? Is this such a satisfying conception that it should justify an extremely violent and improbable grammatical process like that of rendering *pári tashúshas* as if the reading were *paritashivá'nsas*? The participial form *tashúshas* has no right to be anything but an accusative plural, or a genitive or ablative singular; let us have the authority for making a nominative plural of it, and treating *pári* as its prefix, — and better authority than the mere *dictum* of a Hindu grammarian to the effect that the two forms are interchangeable. To us the passage seems most probably one of those not infrequent ones in which forms of the two roots here found are set over against one another, as signifying the 'moving' and the 'fixed' or 'persistent': 'moving forth from that which stands fast'; that is to say, the sun's orb swings itself up into the firmament from among the immovable hills out of which he seems to rise. Once more, by rendering the last third of the verse 'the lights in heaven shine forth,' the translator both misses the assonance found in the original, *rocante rocanâ*, and makes the expression tame by connecting the locative with the noun instead of the verb: render rather 'gleams glimmer in the sky,' or 'a sheen shines out in the sky,' or something like this.

We do not mean that this verse should be taken as a specimen of Müller's best work as a translator and commentator, or even of his average work. But it does bring to light, if in an exaggerated form, some of his characteristic faults. His notes are far from showing that

sound and thoughtful judgment, that moderation and economy, which are among the most precious qualities of an exegete. On the contrary, they display a degree of heedless lavishness, in matter, style, and mode of printing, as if the author were in too much haste to be either select or concise, or as if his one main object had been to fill out the covers of a volume, with as little expense to himself as possible. Of course, he presents us with much that is very valuable, and which all students of the Veda will accept with lively gratitude; but this he dilutes with tedious exhibitions of processes where results would have been sufficient, and with dwelling upon trifles while serious difficulties are slipped over unnoticed. He appears to be suffering under a confusion of the wants of the general reader with those of the special scholar; and, trying to please both, he satisfies neither. With one or two exceptions (notably Professor Roth of Tübingen, and perhaps also Professor Aufrecht of Edinburgh), Müller is, among all living scholars, the one who has studied the Veda most deeply, and whose version of its hymns would carry the greatest weight of authority. But the authority of any particular part of it would be best supported by the perceived success of the work as a whole, by its distinctness, its consistency, its intelligibility and readableness. While Müller's fellow-students would greatly have preferred more translation and less explication, it is, after all, the public at large whom he will have most disappointed;—the public, who were hoping for a work that should show them what the Veda really is, and should put it in an attractive light before them. Both classes alike will be slow to purchase the beginning of a series which seems likely to stretch itself out indefinitely, and after all to remain forever a fragment.

Burnouf, with all his extraordinary ability, was an unfortunate model to select. He was essentially a pioneer and pathmaker. His versatile and enterprising genius had no sooner forced its way into the heart of some difficult subject, working out the method of investigation to be pursued, than he abandoned it and turned to another. Thus his results were always incomplete and fragmentary. In the Veda he never did anything which was of advantage outside the circle of his personal pupils. In the classical Sanskrit, he began, in a style of costly luxury, the publication and translation of an immense work of modern origin and trivial value (the *Bhâgavata Purâna*), and broke it off in the middle. In Zend he performed his most fruitful labor; but, presently laying it aside, he gave himself to the history of Buddhism. Here, too, his researches laid the foundation upon which all who come after him must build; but he himself soon ceased to build on it, and threw himself wholly into the Assyrian inscriptions. In this last department,

where his aid would have been of incalculable value, he had not yet begun to produce for the world, when his untimely and lamented death cut short his useful activity. Burnouf was a giant in whose footsteps ordinary men should not try to walk; but Müller, unless he changes materially the scale of his Veda-translation, is likely to resemble him at least in leaving behind him an unfinished work; even should he realize the current prayer of the Vedic poets, and "live a hundred autumns."

It is doubtless in order to give, at any rate, a secondary kind of completeness to his work, that Müller takes up first the hymns to a certain order of deities; and his plan is in this respect decidedly to be approved. He promises to finish in the next volume the hymns to the Maruts. Why he selected this particular class he does not inform us; perhaps it is because they are not numerous, and have not been much worked upon by previous translators. Of course, he has the right to choose what he will to begin with; only we, on our part, cannot help criticising his choice, and wishing that it had been made differently. If it was any part of his aim to give a foretaste of the contents of the Veda which should be an engaging one, and to tempt those who dipped into it to pursue the study further, he could not well have made a more unfortunate selection. The Maruts, or storm-gods, are an uninteresting set of beings. They hover on the confines between the natural and the supernatural, between the merely phenomenal and the deified and divine. They have a vague and indistinct individuality, and are infertile of mythology and lively and fanciful description. And as they are, so are also their hymns. He who reads through the versions given in this volume, and asks for more of the same, must be sustained by a more than usual interest which he has brought to the work from without. If our author, on the contrary, had prefaced his series of versions with the hymns to the Dawn — which, considering his known predilection for that element in Indo-European mythology, we might almost have expected him to do — or with a selection of hymns of various subject, containing rich mythologic material, with perhaps a tinge of human interest also, he would have made a far more favorable impression, effectively fostering a study whose advance he certainly has greatly at heart.

To the nature of the themes treated we have unquestionably to attribute in great part the tediousness of Müller's versions. But not wholly to this. It appears in his other works as well as here, that that remarkable facility and beauty of style which distinguishes in general his English compositions fails him in translation. Perhaps this is the severest of all tests of a foreigner, the power to translate into nervous

and lively phrase in a language not his own : certainly, all our author's renderings, so far as we know them, are a little tame and spiritless. But we think it is also true that he has taken the work of translation somewhat too easily, put too little of his force into it, and been content to render words and phrases instead of determining to gain a vivid apprehension of a hymn as a whole and to reproduce it as it impressed him. We sorely miss, too, the poetic form. We were disposed, indeed, when reading his introduction, to assent to his claim that "it was out of the question in a translation of this character to attempt an imitation of the original rhythm or metre. . . . At present a metrical translation would only be an excuse for an inaccurate translation"; but we have come to question whether he was right. It certainly is not impossible to make a metric version which shall reproduce with sufficient fidelity one's idea of an original; it may require considerable labor; but if we are to have only a dozen hymns in a volume, we have a right to expect that dozen to be elaborated to the very highest degree. Especially have we been made doubtful of Müller's canon by seeing what Roth has accomplished. In the last volume, namely, of the *Journal of the German Oriental Society* (Vol. XXIV., 1870, pp. 301 ff.), that great scholar has given a rendering, in the metre of the original, of two Vedic hymns, with brief accompanying comments, by way of setting forth what would be his idea of a desirable translation of the Veda. One of the two is of the dozen contained in Müller's volume; and, in order to set the two methods side by side, we have ventured to turn Roth's version (with some modifications) into metrical English; without at all claiming to give again faithfully the terseness and vigor of his German verse.

Müller translates as follows : —

The Prologue.

The sacrificer speaks :

1. With what splendor are the Maruts all equally endowed, they who are of the same age, and dwell in the same house ! With what thoughts ! From whence are they come ? Do these heroes sing forth their (own) strength because they wish for wealth ?
2. Whose prayers have the youths accepted ? Who has turned the Maruts to his own sacrifice ? By what strong devotion may we delight them, they who float through the air like hawks ?

The Dialogue.

The Maruts speak :

3. From whence, O Indra, dost thou come alone, thou who art mighty ? O lord of men, what has thus happened to thee ? Thou greetest (us) when thou comest together with (us), the bright (Maruts). Tell us then, thou with thy bay horses, what thou hast against us !

Indra speaks :

4. The sacred songs are mine, (mine are) the prayers; sweet are the libations! My strength rises, my thunderbolt is hurled forth. They call for me, the prayers yearn for me. Here are my horses, they carry me towards them.

The Maruts speak :

5. Therefore, in company with our strong friends, having adorned our bodies, we now harness our fallow deer with all our might; — for, Indra, according to thy custom, thou hast been with us.

Indra speaks :

6. Where, O Maruts, was that custom of yours, that you should join me who am alone in the killing of Ahi? I indeed am terrible, strong, powerful, — I escaped from the blows of every enemy.

The Maruts speak :

7. Thou hast achieved much with us as companions. With the same valor, O hero, let us achieve then many things, O thou most powerful, O Indra! whatever we, O Maruts, wish with our heart.

Indra speaks :

8. I slew Vritra, O Maruts, with (Indra's) might, having grown strong through my own vigor; I, who hold the thunderbolt in my arms, I have made these all-brilliant waters to flow freely for man.

The Maruts speak :

9. Nothing, O powerful lord, is strong before thee; no one is known among the gods like unto thee. No one who is now born will come near, no one who has been born. Do what has to be done, thou who art grown so strong.

Indra speaks :

10. Almighty power be mine alone, whatever I may do, daring in my heart; for I indeed, O Maruts, am known as terrible: of all that I threw down, I, Indra, am the lord.

11. O Maruts, now your praise has pleased me, the glorious hymn which you have made for me, ye men! — for me, for Indra, for the powerful hero, as friends for a friend, for your own sake and by your own efforts.

12. Truly, there they are, shining towards me, assuming blameless glory, assuming vigor. O Maruts, wherever I have looked for you, you have appeared to me in bright splendor: appear to me also now!

The Epilogue.

The sacrificer speaks :

13. Who has magnified you here, O Maruts? Come hither, O friends, towards your friends. Ye brilliant Maruts, cherish these prayers, and be mindful of these my rites.

14. The wisdom of Mânia has brought us to this, that he should help as the poet helps the performer of a sacrifice: bring (them) hither quickly! Maruts, on to the sage! these prayers the singer has recited for you.

15. This your praise, O Maruts, this your song comes from Mândârya, the son of Mâna, the poet. Come hither with rain! May we find for ourselves offspring, food, and a camp with running water.

Roth adds to his version the following account of the story, so to call it, of the hymn : —

“The singer inquires (vv. 1, 2) whither the Maruts, the winds, whose whistling he hears, are hasting, and who is going to succeed in detaining them at his sacrifice. Then, in the form of a dialogue between the Maruts and Indra (3 – 12), the praises of the former are intended to be set forth ; and this object is not unaptly accomplished, since, although the highest glory is given to Indra, their praise is finally put in the god’s own mouth. Indra, so the dialogue runs on, usually united with the Maruts in lively course, goes this time alone, and is asked by them why he does not take them with him. He makes the evasive answer that he is on the way to a sacrificial feast ; whereupon they are ready and eager to accompany him (5). Indra retorts derisively that they, who are all on hand for junketing, were not quite so forward when the matter impending was the dangerous fight with the dragon, whom he alone had slain (6). The Maruts have nothing to plead against this, but merely call to mind, with self-satisfaction, that they and Indra have done great things together, and that they mean to prove themselves his faithful allies in the future also. Indra has no mind to share his glory with them, and boasts (8) again of his exploits : and the Maruts are fain (9) to acknowledge his might without reserve, and extol him as the chief of the gods. This pacifies the god ; he vaunts himself once more (10), but also thanks the Maruts for their frank and hearty homage, and declares that the sight of them delights his heart (12). Thus their reconciliation is sealed. In the closing verses (13 – 15) the poet turns to the Maruts themselves, and, naming himself, seeks to attract their attention to the feast prepared for them and to his skilful song of praise, and to win them to be present with their gifts.”

And the hymn itself reads thus : —

THE POET :

1. Upon what course are entered now together,
Of common age, of common home, the Maruts ?
With what desire, and whence, have they come hither ?
The heroes make their whistling heard for longing.
2. Whose prayers and praises are the youths enjoying ?
Say, who hath turned the Maruts to his off’ring ?
As they go roving through the air like falcons,
How shall we stay them with our strong devotion ?

THE MARUTS :

3. How comes it, Indra, that thou goest lonely,
Though else so blithe ? tell us what ails thee, master.
Thou ’rt wont to talk with us as we go onward ;
Lord of the coursers, what hast thou against us ?

INDRA :

4. I love the prayers, the wishes, the libations ;
The odors rise ; the *soma*-press is ready ;
They draw and win me with their invocation ;
My coursers here carry me on unto them.

THE MARUTS :

5. So then will we, along with our companions,
The free and mighty, putting on our armor,
Harness at once our spotted deer with pleasure.
Thou com'st exactly to our wish, O Indra !

INDRA :

6. And where then was that wish of yours, ye Maruts,
When me ye sent alone to slay the demon ?
But I, the fierce, the powerful, the fearless,
Have struck down every foeman with my weapons.

THE MARUTS :

7. Thou didst great things when we were thy companions,
By our united manliness, O hero !
For many feats can we achieve, O mightiest,
Indra, with power, whene'er we will, ye Maruts !

INDRA :

8. I Vritra slew, ye Maruts, by my prowess,
And my own fury 't was that made me fearless.
'T was I, with lightning armed, who made these waters,
All sparkling, flow in easy streams for Manu.

THE MARUTS :

9. Before thee, mighty one, is naught unshaken ;
Among the gods is no one found thine equal ;
None born, and none that 's to be born, can reach thee ;
Do, thou exalted one, whate'er it likes thee !

INDRA :

10. Let my power only be without a limit ;
Wisely I finish all that I adventure ;
For I am known as terrible, ye Maruts !
Whate'er I touch, Indra is soon its master.
11. Your praise, O Maruts, now hath given me pleasure,
The worthy hymn that ye for me have uttered, —
For me, for Indra, for the jocund hero,
As friends should for a friend, with feeling hearty.
12. Truly they please me as they stand before me ;
In glory and in vigor they are matchless.

Oft as I've seen you, Maruts, in your splendor,
Ye have delighted, as ye now delight me.

THE POET :

13. Who hath exalted you like us, ye Maruts?
As friends go forth to friends, so come ye hither.
Ye bright ones, fan to ardor our devotions;
Of these my pious labors be ye heedful.
14. Here, where the singer aids the sacrificer,
And Mānya's art has gathered us together,
Ye Maruts, to the holy sage come hither!
These songs of praise the bard to you is utt'ring.
15. This is your praise, and this your song, O Maruts!
Made by Mandāra's son, the singer Mānya.
Come hither with refreshment for our strength'ning!
May we win food, and meadows rich in water!

If our transfer into English does not altogether fail to do justice to Roth's conception and interpretation of the original text, no one, we are sure, can fail to see how greatly inferior is Müller's translation. In Roth's hands, the hymn gains for the first time a unity of design and reality of interest, becomes an actual hymn, a creation of poetic art, such as we see might have kindled the minds and aided the devotions of a primitive people. This liveliness of apprehension, this determination to call nothing "translated" which is not made thorough good sense of, which is not understood in its whole connection and brought into a completely presentable shape, is characteristic of Professor Roth's mode of working, as illustrated by him with reference to the Avesta as well as to the Veda.* His version may be assailable in points of detail, — there may be words and phrases of which Müller's understanding is more accurate, as there unquestionably are others as to which both alike will hereafter be set right; but his ideal and his realization of it are markedly in advance of those of his rival.

It should not fail to be pointed out that Müller, in his Preface (pp. xii, xiii), speaks with the utmost candor and modesty of his own translation, as being, what every translation at the present time must be, "a mere contribution towards a better understanding of the Vedic hymns," which on many points "is liable to correction, and will sooner or later be replaced by a more satisfactory one"; and that he estimates fairly and acknowledges handsomely the labors of his fellow-scholars. How much of doubt and uncertainty still hangs over the whole subject may

* See his "Contributions to the Interpretation of the Avesta," in the current volume of the *Journal of the German Oriental Society*.

be clearly seen from the discordance, as exhibited above, between versions of the same passage by the two leading Vedic scholars, — which discordance appears still more striking when we compare the versions of the other three translators quoted by Müller. Its limits are gradually narrowing, as the Vedic grammar and vocabulary are becoming more thoroughly understood, and, yet more, as the Vedic antiquity, its circumstances, forms of thought, and creeds, are better comprehended; we heartily wish that Müller might see — what appears so plain to many others — that he would hasten on the time of accordance most effectively by giving us as rapidly as possible the results of his efforts at translating, leaving us to infer or conjecture the methods of their attainment.

There is yet another element in the volume, to which we have as yet made only casual reference, — namely, the preface or introduction, of more than 150 pages. It is to be very summarily characterized, as almost wholly wanting in pertinence. About twenty-five pages constitute a real introduction to the translation; the rest has nothing to do with translation at all; it is a discussion whether certain hymns of the Rig-Veda, which pretty evidently did not belong to the text as at first made up, are or are not best treated as a supplement only; it examines the relations to one another of different scholastic forms of the text; it points out certain misreadings and errors of the press in the author's published edition of the Veda, and others which have crept into Aufrecht's transliterated edition, and so on; and it ends with a protracted and in part polemical discussion of certain peculiarities of Vedic metre, having no bearing on interpretation. All has its interest and importance, to be sure; but it does not belong here. If its author had no other opportunity of expressing his views on Vedic subjects before the world, we should not grudge his taking advantage of this one; but the pages of a score of learned journals are eagerly open to him, and even the prefaces of his Rig-Veda volumes are a far fitter receptacle of such matter than the one which he has chosen.

On the whole, we hardly know a volume of which the make-up is more unfortunate and ill-judged, more calculated to baffle the reasonable hopes of him who resorts to it, than the first volume of Müller's so-called "translation" of the Rig-Veda: if the obligation of its title be at all insisted on, at least three quarters of its contents are to be condemned as "padding."

Müller's name has now for nearly a quarter of a century been associated in men's minds with the Rig-Veda. It was about the year 1847 that, having come to England with the simple design of completing his collection of materials for an edition of its text and commentary, he was, through the influence and aid of Wilson and Bunsen, taken

under the munificent patronage of the East India Company, and bidden to elaborate and publish his work in their service and pay. The Veda was not at that time begging for editors, and ready to accept whoever might offer, upon his own terms, and be thankful for him. One edition was already under way in India, and another nearly arranged for in Germany. Both these were broken off or laid aside in Müller's favor, his position being supposed to give him peculiar facilities for the speedy and satisfactory performance of the task he had assumed. He ought, it seems, to have felt strongly the obligation imposed on him by this abandonment of the field on the part of possible rivals. There was a large and rapidly growing body of students of Indian antiquity, waiting and longing for access to the oldest and most important work of the Indian literature, which he had undertaken to furnish them. Their disappointment has not been small. Six or eight years would have been ample time for finishing the work, if the editor had been willing to devote himself to it single-mindedly; now, after more than twenty years, two volumes out of six are still to be given. It was anticipated that, along with this great quarto edition with native commentary, he would employ his materials for a cheaper hand-edition of the text alone, for students' use. Such a one he in fact began; but after so long a delay, and in so unpractical and costly a style, that it met with no favor, and was continued only to the end of the first book (out of eight). The need has since been supplied by Aufrecht, with Weber's help, in the latter's serial, the *Indische Studien*; and Müller has irretrievably lost the honor and satisfaction of being the first editor of the Veda. If the great bulkiness of the native comment rendered his task a long and severe one, the rapidly depreciating value of that comment also enjoined upon him the utmost attainable expedition. Twenty years ago the help of the Indian exegetes was welcome, and almost indispensable, to the Vedic student; now, European erudition has gone far beyond them, and their work is little more than a curiosity, worth examining for its own sake, as illustrating one conspicuous department of Hindu literary activity. Hence, when in the Preface to this volume Müller strenuously asserts and defends the former value of the comment as constituting its present claim to complete publication, he is guilty of a slight anachronism. In fact, he is frank enough to say later that it was of great use to him *in the beginning*, "though it seldom afforded help for the really difficult passages." And he shows us practically how it ought to be treated by a translator, by respectfully making mention of its versions, but then disrespectfully making no account of them, in constructing his own.

These explanations will serve to show why it is that Sanskrit scholars

do not feel themselves bound to any particular gratitude toward Müller for his labors upon the Rig-Veda. Whatever advantage his connection with it has brought to them, it has thus far brought infinitely more to himself personally. He claims, to be sure, on the first page of his Preface, that "it required no small amount of self-denial to decide in favor of devoting a life to the publishing of materials rather than to the drawing of results," plainly wishing us to infer that he had displayed this immense self-denial; but, only five pages later, he pleads further that, "after all one cannot give up the whole of one's life to the collation of Oriental MSS. and the correction of proof-sheets," and fairly confesses that "the two concluding volumes have long been ready for press, and as soon as I can find leisure they too shall be printed and published." Surely an astonishing instance of the blowing of hot and cold out of the same mouth! We have given above our reasons for believing that the translation now begun will not, unless its plan is speedily and radically changed, do much to increase the feeling of obligation toward its author. Not long ago there remained to him still the opportunity of striking a great stroke in behalf of Vedic study by making public the complete *index verborum* of the Rig-Veda which he must have had prepared for many years; but it is doubtful whether even that is left him now. On the whole, it seems as if he would be permanently remembered by scholars in connection with the Rig-Veda chiefly as the first (and only) editor of the great commentary of Sâyana.

2. — *The Life of John Adams. Begun by his Son JOHN QUINCY ADAMS. Completed by CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS, JR.* Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co. 2 vols. 1871.

THE "London Athenæum" of April 1st, in a review of this *Life*, was pleased to say, "The American world will in time forget Adams!" With all possible submission to the better judgment of so infallible an authority, especially as to American affairs and American books, we must take leave to say that the American world will do no such thing. It may not be the wisest of worlds, and, like other worlds, it may have gone spinning away out of its proper orbit now and then, and appeared almost as foolish as some of the older worlds, but it does know and remember its friends; and ingratitude to its benefactors, at least after they are dead, is not one of the vices of this particular Republic. To be sure, its memory is not sufficient to hold in liveliest remembrance all who assisted at its birth and kept watch over its cradle. It is only a very few names for which posterity has room in its mind and of which